



San Diego City Attorney **CASEY GWINN**

NEWS RELEASE

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CITY OF SAN DIEGO RECEIVES NATIONAL HONOR FOR ITS COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS IN THE CREATION OF THE SAN DIEGO FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER

The City of San Diego is one of four cities in the nation that will be honored for outstanding public and private partnership in the creation of its Family Justice Center. The National League of Cities at its annual Congress of Cities Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana will present the prestigious 2004 James C. Howland Award for Municipal Enrichment in December to the City.

"This award is a tremendous tribute to the Mayor, Council, Manager, Police Chief, Fire Chief, and our community partners for their incredible collaborative efforts to help San Diego families caught in the cross-fire of family violence," said City Attorney Casey Gwinn.

The award highlights and encourages community efforts that have preserved and enriched the environmental quality of life in cities and towns. The City will receive a cash award for \$2,000 to be donated to a community non-profit organization, which will be chosen by the City.

The San Diego Family Justice Center is the most comprehensive "one stop shop" service center in America for families that are experiencing the physical and emotional trauma of domestic violence. Prior to the Family Justice Center, families were subjected to seeking out help on their own and traveling to dozens of places to obtain these services which were scattered all over the city. San Diego had already seen dramatic drops in its domestic violence homicide rate after 15 years to working to coordinate services, but more remained to be done.

The San Diego Family Justice Center opened its doors on October 10, 2002. It is the vision of City Attorney Gwinn. The Family Justice Center is the first facility in the nation to house, in one location, the entire Domestic Violence Units of a Police Department and a Prosecutor's Office. Under one roof, there are over 120 domestic violence professionals from seven different city and county agencies and from 24 private, non-profit

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community service organizations. The Family Justice Center also houses a, first of its kind, free-standing Forensic Medical Unit, specializing in the documentation, evaluation and treatment of non-life threatening domestic violence injuries.

Next month, the Family Justice Center will formally open a new Children's Facility at the Family Justice Center. It too will be a national first – bringing together child abuse and domestic violence services in one place in a coordinated effort to help both children and adults in the same place instead of breaking apart families and sending them from agency to agency to agency in order to get help.

For more information about the San Diego Family Justice Center, visit www.familyjusticecenter.org.

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